

## **TO PARENTS AND FAMILIES OF WPI STUDENTS *GOING OFF-CAMPUS* –**

### **FROM PARENTS AND FAMILIES OF WPI STUDENTS WHO *HAVE GONE OFF-CAMPUS!***

Congratulations! You must be incredibly proud of your student who is preparing to go off campus shortly. We know that we were very proud of our students at this same time in their lives...but we remember that we were also a little apprehensive - especially those of us whose child had never been far from home for so long before.

We wanted to take this opportunity to tell you – we think we know what you are feeling. And also to offer some advice that we thought, as parents, we could offer, given that we have already been through this (some of us more than once!) —

1. Read the enclosed Going Global Handbook. We found this to be a great resource. Pay particular attention to the sections on medical insurance. You want to be sure that your student knows what the process is for seeking medical attention before they have to! As stated in the book, patients usually pay for services rendered in cash and then seek reimbursement from their insurance company upon return.
2. Speaking of medical issues... talk to your daughter or son about your need to hear from them. If they need to go to a doctor or hospital for medical treatment, as long as it is not a life-threatening emergency, it is their responsibility to let you know. The advisor will not contact you about ear infections, strep throat, poison ivy, stomach aches, diarrhea – so if it is important to you to know about these things, tell your daughter or son to let you know! Also remember that anywhere WPI sends students be it Bangkok or Boston there are always high quality medical and dental facilities available. And of course, in a true emergency, you will be contacted by WPI.
3. Money issues are very important – so pay attention to that section of the handbook as well. An extra step you may want to take is to contact credit card companies before your student leaves home. Often the card will be declined unless it has been cleared for international travel first.
4. Also, have a conversation before your son or daughter leaves about how you plan to communicate. Will it be by email or telephone? How often? Do you expect to hear from them upon arrival so that you know they got there? All of these issues should be worked out before hand.
5. And of course, speaking of communication issues – read the section and policy regarding cell phones carefully. Make sure that your child knows that if they use a cell phone as a regular way to communicate with you or their friends it is going to be very expensive. It is probably better (and cheaper!) to use the cell phone for emergencies and set up a regular schedule for calling using the landlines in apartments. Also, parents should put international long distance on their home phones for when they call their student. It makes a huge difference in the per-minute usage rate. There is a monthly fee and once you order it you should then double check that it is functioning.

6. If you are planning to visit your student while they are at an off-campus site, please plan with this caveat in mind: During the term they are expected to work *at least* the equivalent of a fulltime job. That means that they cannot leave work early to play tour guide, nor can they take a few days off. Instead plan your trip around the very end of their time there – that way you can see the final presentation (and you will be amazed at how professional they are!), celebrate their accomplishment, and then enjoy their company in a location that they have gotten to know quite well.
7. Lastly and most importantly, address the issues of health and safety. Let them know what you are concerned about and talk these issues out. Make sure that they understand what your expectations are of them and that you trust them to make good decisions.
8. Do not hesitate to call the folks at the IGSD if you have any questions! They are knowledgeable about where the students are going and are happy to talk with parents.
9. If you do not already have a passport – get one! You do not want to be unable to get to your student in an emergency.

This is going to be a great experience for your student – trust us! Our kids all came back walking a little taller, with a little more confidence, and definitely more appreciative of the world in which they live.

We wish the same for you and your student!

*Pam - daughter went to London*

*Jackie - son went to Thailand and daughter to Costa Rica*

*Jim – two daughters who went to Washington, DC*

*Pam - daughter went to Costa Rica*

*Ken - daughter went to Australia*

*Guillermo - daughter went to Madrid*

*Marylou - son went to London and Boston*

*Laurie - daughter went to DC and Wall Street*

*Tom – son went to London, Puerto Rico & Silicon Valley*